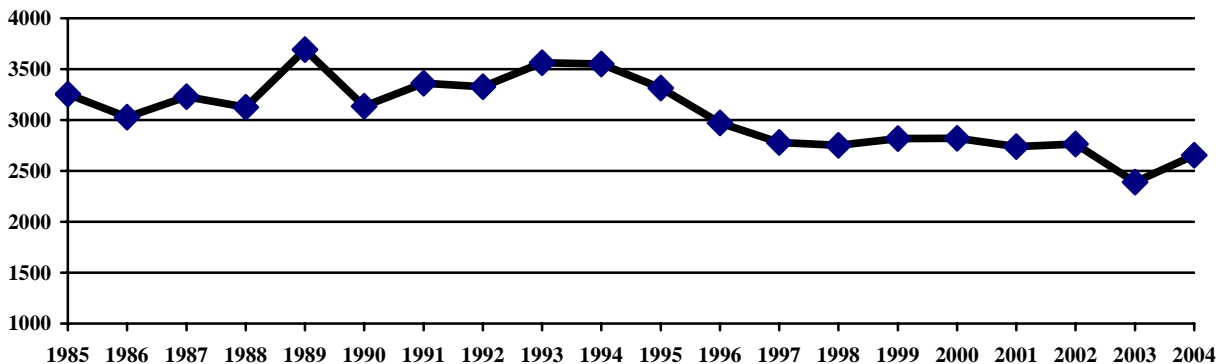


LARCENY

is the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession of another. It includes crimes such as shoplifting, pocket-picking, thefts from motor vehicles, thefts of auto parts and accessories, horse thefts, and bicycle thefts, in which no use of force, violence, fraud, or trespass occurs. In the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, this crime category does not include embezzlement, “con” games, forgery, and worthless checks. Motor vehicle theft is also excluded from this category, as it is a separate crime index offense.

**Twenty Year Review:
Larceny in Cambridge, 1985-2004**



2,389 reported in 2003 • 2,654 reported in 2004

Larceny is the most common “Index” or “Part I” crime, accounting for just over 60% of the serious crime total. Larceny often produces the most patterns. Numbers and patterns will undoubtedly remain high as we continue into the 21st century. The three categories that produced some of the highest numbers – larcenies from buildings, motor vehicles, and persons – are often fueled by changes in technology. As electronics such as laptops and cellular phones evolve, they become easier to steal, conceal, and ultimately sell. Despite the high number of incidents reported, it remains unclear how accurately this number reflects the actual number of larcenies committed. Larceny remains one of the most underreported crimes. Note that the larceny total only includes incidents reported to the Cambridge Police.

Larceny is further broken down into the nine categories listed below. As can be seen from the table, there were significant increases in larceny totals this year.

Categorization	2003	2004	% Change
Larcenies from Buildings	518	572	10%
Larcenies from MV	657	734	12%
Larcenies of Bicycles	212	229	8%
Larcenies from Persons	331	381	15%
Shoplifting	358	383	7%
Larcenies of Services	24	30	25%
Larcenies from Residences	183	226	23%
Larcenies of License Plates	75	67	-11%
Other (Unclassifiable) Larcenies	31	32	3%

LARCENY FROM BUILDINGS

Larcenies from Buildings are non-burglary thefts from commercial establishments. "Non-burglary" means that either the offender had a specific right to be on the premises, or that the building was open to the general public, and that no force was used to gain entry to the building where the theft was committed.

Geographic Breakdown by Business District		
AREA	2003	2004
Galleria/East Cambridge	75	104
Kendall Square/MIT	45	31
Inman Square	29	35
Central Square	98	82
Cambridgeport/Riverside	16	26
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	41	50
Harvard Square	80	90
1500–1900 Mass. Ave.	42	46
Porter Square	31	37
Alewife/West Cambridge	61	71

TOP 5 HOT SPOTS OF 2004

1. Cambridgeside Galleria Mall
100 Cambridgeside Place - 56 incidents
2. Bally's Health Club
1815 Massachusetts Avenue – 28 incidents
3. Mount Auburn Hospital
330 Mount Auburn Street – 17 incidents
4. Charles Square Hotel
1 Bennett Street – 11 incidents
&
YMCA
820 Massachusetts Avenue – 11 incidents
5. Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
459 Broadway – 10 incidents

There were 572 larcenies from buildings reported this year. This total represents a 10% increase from the previous year, and is well above the five-year average of 450 incidents. Larceny from building has shown a steady decline over the past decade.

The following are the most common larceny from building scenarios:

1. A thief walks into an office building during open business hours, posing as a delivery person or claiming to be looking for an employee that does not exist. The thief moves unnoticed into an empty office and takes personal or company property. Credit cards and laptops are favorite targets. The thief then escapes unseen. This scenario accounted for 19% of the total reported.
2. An employee of a commercial establishment leaves his or her personal property in a "back room" where he or she thinks it will be safe or on a store counter. Later, they notice that the property is missing. Approximately 8% of incidents reported occurred in this manner.
3. A thief pries open a locker at a fitness club, targeting credit cards to be used afterwards at various commercial establishments. In 2004 11% of larceny from building incidents occurred in this manner.
4. Someone leaves his or her belongings unattended for a short time, such as leaving a coat in a public coat closet, and then comes back to find the property missing. Nine percent (9%) of incidents reported occurred in this manner.
5. A thief lurks in a school hallway, waiting for the opportunity to steal property left unattended in classrooms or left unlocked in school desks or lockers. This scenario accounted for 8% of the total reported.
6. A thief finds him or herself in a situation where the opportunity arises to steal from a depository such as a safe or a cash register and the thief cannot resist. This scenario accounted for 5% of the total reported.

LARCENY FROM MOTOR VEHICLES

Larcenies from Motor Vehicles involve an offender either breaking into a car and stealing valuables within or stealing an exterior accessory (such as tires and hubcaps) from an automobile.

Larcenies from motor vehicles remained rather stable in comparison to the past decade, although there was a 12% increase from the previous year. This year's incidents were over 40 reports above the five-year average of 690 annual incidents. While Peabody incurred the greatest increase in car breaks, MIT experienced the most significant decrease. (However, as MIT has their own police department, this change should be considered in comparison to their reported data.)

Neighborhood	2003	2004	% Change
East Cambridge	129	86	-33%
MIT	28	18	-36%
Inman/Harrington	34	52	53%
Area 4	50	70	40%
Cambridgeport	80	94	18%
Mid-Cambridge	87	93	7%
Riverside	32	39	22%
Agassiz	31	40	29%
Peabody	44	76	73%
West Cambridge	53	68	28%
North Cambridge	63	60	-5%
Cambridge Highlands	16	22	38%
Strawberry Hill	10	15	50%
Unknown	0	1	N/A

Neighborhood	2003	2004	% Change
East Cambridge	129	86	-33%
MIT	28	18	-36%
Inman/Harrington	34	52	53%
Area 4	50	70	40%
Cambridgeport	80	94	18%
Mid-Cambridge	87	93	7%
Riverside	32	39	22%
Agassiz	31	40	29%
Peabody	44	76	73%
West Cambridge	53	68	28%
North Cambridge	63	60	-5%
Cambridge Highlands	16	22	38%
Strawberry Hill	10	15	50%
Unknown	0	1	N/A

Overall, trends in larceny from motor vehicle have been the regular theft of stereos by breaking windows. Hondas continued to be the most targeted car make for stereo thefts. The increase in larceny from motor vehicles can be attributed, in part, to two patterns that have risen from the past years. The two recurrent patterns, which were experienced throughout the city, in larceny from motor vehicle were: theft of Honda/Acura tires and theft of Audi headlights.



IN FOCUS: AUDI HEADLIGHT THEFTS

Approximately six percent of all reported larcenies from motor vehicles involved the theft of automobile headlights. Of those 41 incidents, 82% were headlight thefts from Audi's. This trend in larceny from motor vehicle was seen on a very small scale in 2003, when only four incidents were reported out of the 657 total car breaks. Audi headlight thefts began at the start of the year, and were, for the most part, concentrated in the east end of the city. As the year progressed, incidents migrated westward until the fall. By year's end these incidents were scattered throughout the city. Key observations concerning these thefts are:

- Almost all incidents took place overnight, throughout the week.
- Most targeted vehicles were parked on the street, in a driveway or parking lot. Only three of the targeted motor vehicles were parked in a parking garage.
- Individual residences were targeted multiple times.

Taking these points into consideration, owners of Audi's should try to park their vehicles in secured areas overnight, such as parking or personal garages, rather than on the street. As victims were targeted multiple times, it is obvious that perpetrators know where to locate the specific vehicles, concealment would be the best preventative measure.

The theft of Audi headlights as a trend in larceny from motor vehicle has not only affected Cambridge, but has also affected surrounding jurisdictions, such as Somerville and Boston and has been seen in other parts of the east coast, such as New York and New Jersey.

IN FOCUS: HONDA AND ACURA TIRE THEFTS

The thefts of Honda tires and rims emerged as a trend in 2003. However, the number of tire thefts nearly doubled in 2004, with Hondas and Acuras making up over half of the targeted vehicles. These thefts mostly occur

overnight on the street, with the most common days of the week being Tuesdays and Thursdays. Incidents are concentrated in the center of the city, in Agassiz and Peabody, most often taking place on the weekends.

Top Three Methods of Entry

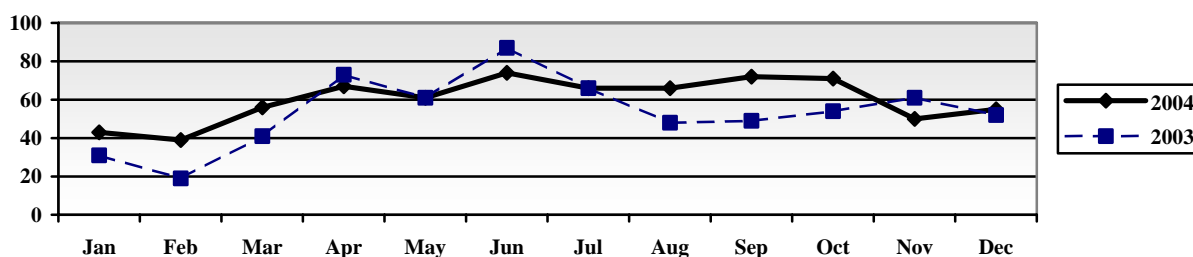
1. The most common method of entry into motor vehicles is by breaking one or more windows of the vehicle. This method was reported in 33% of the incidents.
2. The second most common method of entry into motor vehicles is by unknown means. That is, that there are no signs of forced entry to the vehicle. This method was reported in 19% of the incidents.
3. The third most common method of entry into motor vehicles is by an unlocked/open car door. This type of incident is a crime of opportunity and could be prevented by simply locking doors. This method was reported in 11% of the incidents.

*Note that in 19% of the reported larcenies from motor vehicle, no entry was made, rather the theft involved the removal of exterior parts of the motor vehicle.

Top Ten Stolen Items of 2004

1. Car Stereos/CD players – 197 reported stolen
2. Auto Parts Misc. – 113 reported stolen
3. CDs/Tapes – 61 reported stolen
4. Cash – 57 reported stolen
5. Tires – 46 reported stolen
6. Cellular Telephones – 42 reported stolen
7. Laptop Computers – 34 reported stolen
8. Misc. Electronics – 25 reported stolen
9. Wallet – 24 reported stolen
10. Bags – 23 reported stolen

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Motor Vehicles



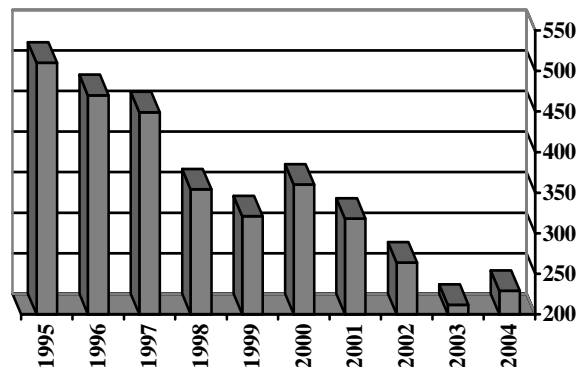
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Larcenies from motor vehicles have consistently averaged between 16-20% of the total serious crime index in Cambridge for over 20 years. This year's total is consistent with this trend. Nationally, thefts from vehicles made up 20% of all crime reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigations.
- For the first five years of the 1980s, Cambridge averaged 1,050 larcenies from motor vehicles. This average increased to 1,175 per year between 1986 and 1990. Between 1990 and 1995, incidents leveled off to between 850 and 900 incidents per year.
- Throughout 1996, the Cambridge Police Department assigned high priority to the early intervention of larceny from motor vehicle patterns. Target areas were flooded with directed patrols to combat chronic problem areas where spatial and temporal trends had been identified. The result of these efforts was the lowest larceny from motor vehicle total in 16 years. This number continued to decline in 1997.
- Since 1997, the total has fluctuated between 650 and 750 incidents.

LARCENY OF BICYCLES

After a steady three-year decline in larceny of bicycles, 2004 marked an increase in incidents. The eight percent increase is attributable to the fact that 2003 experienced a record low. Between 1989 and 1994, bicycle theft exhibited a sharp ascent, soaring from an average of 270 per year in the 1980s to 584 in 1994. Since 1994, the crime has been steadily decreasing, with the exception of the slight increase reported in 2000. These declines reflect, perhaps, the increased publicity given to this crime, the greater availability of bicycle racks, and a crime-prevention conscious public. (The Cambridge Police Department's bicycle theft statistics do not include thefts reported to the MIT or Harvard University Police Departments. These additional thefts could add several hundred to the theft total.)

Bicycle Larceny, 1995-2004



Not surprisingly, 70% of bicycle thefts fell between May and September, when bicycles pack the streets and sidewalks. The highest number of thefts were reported in June and September. Most incidents occur during the afternoon throughout the week.

NEIGHBORHOOD	2003	2004
East Cambridge	19	15
MIT	12	7
Inman/Harrington	17	14
Area 4	22	23
Cambridgeport	23	21
Mid-Cambridge	44	34
Riverside	16	30
Agassiz	6	8
Peabody	13	12
West Cambridge	17	14
North Cambridge	17	36
Cambridge Highlands	1	4
Strawberry Hill	5	11
Unknown	19	15

Locks present little difficulty to bicycle thieves, who often bring bolt cutters or pry bars with them. Thirty-four percent of all reported bicycle thefts involved a locked bicycle on the street, sidewalk or rack. Unlocked bicycles that were on private property followed, making up 29% of reported incidents. These thefts occur in apartment building hallways, or when bicycles are left in private yards.

Incidents were scattered throughout busy commercial areas, where visitors and employees commute on bikes. Specific areas of repeat incidents included the Porter Square T Station, the shopping center of Alewife Brook Parkway and Cambridge Rindge and Latin School premises.

LARCENIES FROM PERSONS

Larcenies from persons describes pocket-picking or any theft that occurs within the victim's area of control. The thefts are non-confrontational, and usually the victim is not aware of the theft until after it has occurred. If any confrontation between offender and victim takes place, the crime is recorded as a Robbery.

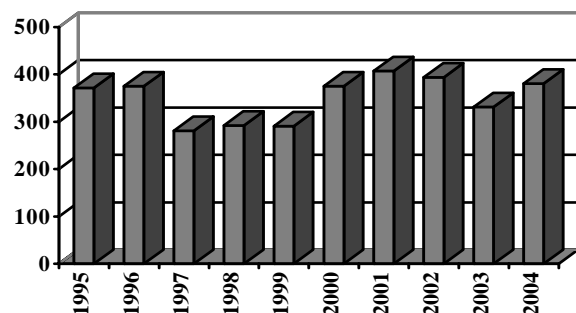
Typically, larcenies from persons dominate the larceny subcategories. However, in 2004, the larceny from person total fell into the fourth highest position. Theft from people shopping and dining in Harvard Square and the Central Square drove this total.

BUSINESS DISTRICT	2003	2004
Galleria/East Cambridge	48	44
Kendall Square/MIT	9	15
Inman Square/Harrington	14	18
Central Square	99	86
Cambridgeport/Riverside	7	6
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	7	14
Harvard Square	100	136
1500-1900 Mass. Ave.	11	15
Porter Square/North Cambridge	15	23
Alewife/West Cambridge	21	24

The following represents three recurring scenarios that dominate larcenies from persons:

1. A diner places his or her jacket over the back of a chair, or places her purse under her chair. Someone sitting behind the victim goes through the coat or purse, taking the valuables within, or takes the coat or purse entirely. This accounts for 39% of larcenies from persons. Incidents at restaurants and cafes located in Harvard and Central Square dominated this categorization. Concentrations were reported at and around The Garage in Harvard Square, between the 500 to 700 blocks of Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square and the Cambridgeside Galleria. Larcenies from person are generally easy to prevent. Remember to always keep your belongings within your control. Do not leave purses on the floor, on the back of your chair, or otherwise unattended. Do not leave wallets or cell phones in the pockets of hanging coats.

Larcenies from Persons, 1995-2004



that modern criminals are increasingly failing to develop. Harvard Square and Central Square report the highest pocket-picking numbers, with concentrations in the early to mid-afternoons.

2. A shopper, usually in a supermarket, keeps her purse in her shopping cart. While she is distracted selecting merchandise, someone pilfers the purse from the cart. This accounts for about 19% of reported thefts. The highest concentrations were at the Cambridgeside Galleria, the Porter Square retailers, and the shopping center at Alewife Brook Parkway.
3. While the victim is walking through a public place, a pickpocket stealthily reaches into the victim's coat, purse, or backpack and removes valuables. This scenario accounted for about 13% of the larceny from the person reports in 2004, but this percentage is ever decreasing. Pocket-picking requires a particular skill

SHOPLIFTING

In 2004, shoplifting incidents increased by only seven percent in comparison to 2003. The Cambridgeside Galleria and Porter Square/North Cambridge reported the most incidents, and both rose significantly from last year. It is important to note however, that since shoplifting incidents are generally almost always reported when an arrest is made, underreporting is a serious problem. The actual shoplifting number may be six to ten times the statistic given in this report. This year more reports without arrests were made than in the previous years, but a majority of the incidents did result in an arrest.

BUSINESS DISTRICT	2003	2004
Galleria/East Cambridge	118	146
Kendall Square/MIT	3	0
Inman Square/Harrington	8	3
Central Square	75	78
Cambridgeport/Riverside	10	8
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	4	3
Harvard Square	77	63
1500-1900 Mass. Ave.	9	2
Porter Square/North Cambridge	19	31
Alewife/West Cambridge	35	49

Shoplifters usually fall into one of five categories:

1. **Juvenile Shoplifters** who steal on a dare, to impress their peers, to get an "adrenaline rush," or to compensate for lack of money.
2. **Impulse Shoplifters** who seize a sudden chance, such as an unattended dressing room or a blind aisle. Sometimes, the "impulse" is a long line or sudden lack of money.
3. **Alcoholics, vagrants, and drug addicts**, who steal erratically and clumsily. When caught, this type of shoplifter is more likely than others to get violent (see "Shop Owner/Patron" assaults in the Assault section).
4. **Kleptomaniacs** who steal to satisfy a psychological need.
5. **Professionals**, who steal expensive items and resell them to fences or "flea markets."

LARCENY FROM RESIDENCES

Larcenies from Residences are non-burglary thefts from apartments, hallways, garages, and yards. “Non-burglary” means that no force or trespass was involved in the theft: the thefts are committed by people who have the right to be on the property. They include thefts committed by guests, roommates, family members, workers, and home health care providers. They also include thefts committed from common areas of apartment buildings, and thefts committed from property surrounding a house, such as the front yard, walkway, or tool shed.

Since larcenies from residences are usually committed by someone known to the victim, pattern identification and intervention by the police department is difficult. The most common larceny from residence scenarios are:

- Thefts committed by visitors or guests to a residence: 35%
- Thefts committed by someone working in the apartment, such as a painter, plumber, contractor, or maintenance man: 12%
- Thefts from a common hallway, foyer, or storage area of an apartment building: 19%
- Thefts from a yard, porch, or other area surrounding a residence: 13%.
- Thefts of mail or packages delivered by a parcel service: 11%
- Thefts committed by a family member, spouse, or romantic partner (i.e., “domestic thefts”): 10%

NEIGHBORHOOD	2003	2004
East Cambridge	18	15
MIT	0	1
Inman/Harrington	10	20
Area 4	23	12
Cambridgeport	26	37
Mid-Cambridge	32	43
Riverside	14	23
Agassiz	7	7
Peabody	15	19
West Cambridge	14	18
North Cambridge	15	19
Cambridge Highlands	2	3
Strawberry Hill	7	9

LARCENY OF SERVICES

This crime includes taxicab fare evasion, “dining and ditching,” “gassing and going,” and other failures to pay for services already rendered. There were 30 of these crimes reported in 2004. One third of incidents involved gasoline theft, 30% taxi fare evasion, restaurant check evasion (27%) and evasion of auto repair and parking fees made up 10 percent.

Protect your property and your business!! Please see page 139 for tips on how you can protect against different types of larceny.